



## **Sierra Nevada Conservancy Board to Decide on \$4.9 Million in Prop. 84 Grants for Sierra Forest Projects**

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*By: Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC)*

AUBURN, May 24, 2012 - Approximately \$4.9 million in grant awards for work to restore Sierra Nevada forests to ecological health and prevent damaging forest fires will be up for approval at the June 7 meeting of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Governing Board in Lone Pine (Inyo County). The funding is from Proposition 84, passed by California voters in 2006.

"For this round of funding we received nearly 200 initial requests, which we have painstakingly reduced to 26 recommendations to the board," said SNC Executive Officer Jim Branham. "The large number of requests is a result of the poor condition of many of our forests throughout the Sierra and the growing threat of catastrophic fire."

The 26 grant applications to be submitted for board approval include the following cross section of projects:

- Fuels Reduction (twelve projects, \$2.5 million)
- Forest Health/Restoration (seven projects, \$1.48 million)
- Meadow Restoration (four projects, \$473,422)
- Invasive Species Removal (two projects, \$73,867)
- Conservation Easement Acquisitions (one project, \$350,000)

(For a complete list of project names, types, funding amounts and locations, visit: [www.sierranevada.ca.gov](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov)).

The board's agenda also includes a presentation on the SNC's work with the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and Inyo County regarding the potential future use and management of the former Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery, which is no longer utilized by DFG. Currently, the Friends of Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery oversee a portion of the facility for educational purposes.

"The historic Fish Hatchery is an icon in the Eastern Sierra and there is growing support for tapping into its economic and community benefits," said Inyo County Supervisor Linda Arcularius, who also serves on the SNC board. "The county, the SNC and DFG are working with the Friends of Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery to begin to identify its most beneficial uses in order to preserve this unique eastern Sierra asset."

The board will also consider approval of guidelines for the 2012-13 round of Prop. 84 grants, which will be focused on the preservation of ranches and agricultural lands. If the guidelines are approved, the request for proposals could go out later in June.

Members of the board and staff will participate in a field trip June 6 to the former Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery and to Lone Pine High School. The field trip will begin at the main parking lot of the Best Western Frontier, 1008 S. Main Street in Lone Pine.

A reception will be held following the field trip at the Lone Pine Film Museum, 701 S. Main Street, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

The board meeting will be held the following day at the Boulder Creek RV Resort, 2550 U.S. 395, in Lone Pine, from 9 a.m. to approximately 1 p.m. The public is invited to all SNC activities and time will be allotted for public comment at the board meeting.

Persons interested in attending the field trip must provide their own transportation. To RSVP for the field trip and reception, visit [www.SierraNevada.ca.gov](http://www.SierraNevada.ca.gov) and look under "Announcements."

Created in 2004, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy is a state agency whose mission is to improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region. In its first five years, the SNC, which receives no general fund tax dollars, has awarded approximately \$40 million in grants for projects including fuels reduction, conservation easements and acquisitions, and watershed and habitat restoration. To view a map of project locations to date, visit the [SNC's Grants Web page](#).

The SNC Governing Board meets quarterly around the Sierra Nevada Region, which spans 25 million acres, encompasses all or part of 22 counties and runs from the Oregon border on the north, to southeast of Bakersfield. Of the 13 voting members, six are self-selected county supervisors, one from each of the six Sierra Nevada Conservancy subregions.